

TOC H JOURNAL

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SUPPLEMENT

ARTIFEX: THE CRAFTSMAN IN TOC H

48 pages of text, 16 plates.

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IN HOLIDAY MOOD

I.—Two Texts on Holidays

The following unconventional sermon was preached by TUBBY at All Hallows.

THE last week in July possesses a significance peculiarly its own in English life. This cannot be ascribed to the pre-eminence of the Apostle James, whose saintly virtues are featured for presentation upon the 25th; nor is it that the English have renewed a deep devotional cult towards St. Anne, to whom the 26th is dedicated. Both saints have indeed lent their honoured names to sovereigns of Great Britain. Anne's protégée was good, but her departure has passed into an unfeeling proverb; while the Apostle James was far less fortunate in both the kings who bore his name but lacked his character.

If it is then no Saint's Day which illuminates the final week of July, what can it be? The substitution of an "i" for "y" conducts us to the true solution—it is not holydays, but holidays, which loom ahead and energise the outworn spirits of society.

For once it seems that the whole fabric of our British civilisation, groaning and travailing together until now, agrees within its huge diversity to precipitate its elements into the tranquil pool of August, wherein leisure itself need not, at least in expectation, be arduously pursued. This is how all men feel before the holidays. It is their own fault that their expectations are more often than not belied: the energies of August are incredible. After July 20 the world, determined to desert itself, stands for ten days upon the springboard, packing and breaking-up.

Two texts in Holy Writ, if wrested from their context, meet this period. The first is to be found in the Apocrypha, Maccabees iv., 1, where we are told that "Gorgias took five thousand footmen." Gorgias in a modern *Pilgrim's Progress* would be as fine a name as could be thought of for those whose super-tax exceeds their virtues. He stands within the parable for the regrettable class, fortunately rarer in fact than in press photographs, who cannot leave magnificence behind them, but needs must take a retinue of lackeys to introduce them to simplicity. They have endured the season to its dregs, and exhaustion has ensued, coupled, it may be, with indigestion. The season, it may be remarked, consists of a peculiar period when those who possess coronets desire to magnetise indubitable cash in satisfactory quantity; while at the same time cash desires to magnetise a coronet. Unfortunately for the ambitions of both, neither the precious stones nor the golden ore is patient of magnetic influence. Hope is, however, never at an end, and there are moors in Scotland where meetings will occur which may prove fruitful. Filled with such spiritual expectations, society deserts with one accord that portion of the town which it considers to be the sole inhabitable London.

Remove ten thousand people, even though they be the Upper Ten (a phrase painfully reminiscent of the dentist's chair) and there are still some millions left in London. *Punch* once presented its readers with the portrait of a society lady visiting for the first time an overcrowded dwelling in the slums, and saying with a

sigh to an astonished mother of an enormous family, that town was very empty nowadays!

By contrast, we may not forget the tribute paid in Matthew Arnold's sonnet to the Minister who replied that he fared bravely amid the August squalor of Spitalfields "much cheered by thoughts of Christ, the Living Bread." Changes have come to-day in bad conditions, and things are far better now than they were then. Yet only last year an East End unit of Toc H reported an aged clergyman whom they had found who had been unable to take a holiday for three years. The situation was then dealt with drastically, and by the happiest co-operation £10 was raised and given to the priest on the sole condition that he would spend it on himself for once. His Sunday work was taken over from All Hallows, and Toc H ran the district on week-days. Cases like this recur. But I am wandering from my present subject.

Most of us are not living in a slum, nor yet alongside Gorgias. The lower middle classes of Society claim us, although we may dispute their right to do so. Our neighbour's common clay and need of holidays are both of them summarised in a single sentence which may be found in the Prophet Jeremiah, 22nd verse of Chapter 29, "the smiths had departed from Jerusalem."

School Holidays

This week in July provides a landmark in Smith family history. The schools are breaking-up. Prize-givings, Annual Reports, Displays, manifestations of valour, virtue and intelligence resound throughout a column of the *Times*, diminishing in type in precise ratio to the school's prestige. Speech Halls are filled with patient and parental congregations, assembled in an atmosphere which would be solemn, if not somnolent, were it not for the re-awakening ardour of family pride coupled with mild applause. Cheers are proposed and given; votes of thanks framed and forwarded; improving volumes bestowed by eminent nonentities, unnaturally benevolent, upon prize winners unnaturally spruce and self-possessed. Classical plays, fondly believed to be intelligible, are partially performed; unctious abounds, and good advice runs like weak wine from every public fountain of admonition.

The following day the schools break up in earnest. The last lock-gate is, as it were, flung open, another body of fresh water bestows itself in volume upon Life's tidal river, driving back for the moment the brackish influences, until these interpenetrate and mingle with what has now become their reinforcement. Three hundred and forty thousand boys and girls are boys and girls no longer, but become within the eye of the law "young persons," whether they are among the favoured few whose schools have been the nurseries of the great, or whether from the humbler factories of instruction. In any case, we trust that most of them will have some sort of holiday before the next chapter of their life begins.

Then there are those, five or six times as numerous, who will go back to school. These are the higher water of the river, which have as yet encountered only the upper reaches of Life's stream. For them the open lock-gates of the summer holiday have no taint of solemnity or sadness.

Forty years back it was within our family a time of deep resolve, to which our high spirits were attuned by a home-made calendar, which we cut off day after day throughout the month of July. The station 'bus, doomed to convey the household to Paddington in time to catch the 9.15 p.m. train, was ordered well ahead; the order was received and annotated, but, none the less, upon the night itself, it was premised by the whole junior household that the 'bus would not come, or if it came the horse or pair would fall down within the shafts outside the front door; or the train itself would fail to secure a sufficiently vivacious engine, or else the engine driver would be paralysed by the omission of sufficient fuel. Each of these fears in turn possessed our infant minds, and all of them together overwhelmed us. Then on the night itself, we were assembled by my eldest sister and marched off down the road in resolute array. The rule was that no child worth calling Clayton might look back over its own or anyone else's shoulder until a certain spot in the long road was reached. Then, opposite that spot, we faced about with a rapidity never achieved by any military evolution—the brave old Duke of York himself would have been put to shame. Meanwhile, our eyes were glued upon the corner of the road around which the 'bus in due time would appear, if no one had forgotten the arrangement. Year after year the station 'bus arrived unflinching. We boarded it, convinced, like Captain Dowler, that the most cherished items of our luggage were neither on top nor down below. These fears at rest, we rolled towards the station. The train itself backed in, here was our carriage labelled by some kind fairy as reserved for no one but the Clayton family. Disposed herein, our fears about the engine were falsified by the convincing proof of its capacities. Contentment and conviction ushered in a sense that bedtime was now overdue. The children knew no more until the morning, when at Carmarthen Junction engines were interchanged and a cold sponge exuded moisture on our hands and foreheads, clearing away the night, if not the soot. From this stage onwards, the progress of the train became more lingering and inconsequent; it hesitated, halted and was still at many wayside stations. The sun, meanwhile, having been called very much earlier, decided to get up with a red face. Haverfordwest was then the final point attainable by train. Here breakfast was awaiting us *en prince*. It seemed, after all, that father had forgotten nothing. Thereafter we drove on across Welsh hills till at last we reached the bay of Fishguard, and then our house half-way up the steep hill which led towards the heart of Goodwick village. Here, on arrival, the whole junior household was promptly put to bed, and not allowed to go and test the beach until the afternoon. This element of discipline, not lightly disregarded in our family, had, as we recognised, a regrettable degree of wisdom behind its apparent harshness.

'The Sleep named Death'

I sometimes think, now I am growing old, that the great father God behaves like this when He condemns His children to a period of that short sleep named Death, in order that their spirits and their sight may not be overweary from the world before they test the loveliness of heaven. We shall know better how to obey His orders and thus be ready to awake with lightened eyes and playful energies ere we address ourselves to new expanses.

TUBBY.

II.—Tourism

"GOD GAVE all men all earth to love" wrote Kipling in a poem chiefly concerned with the lauding of his own pet corner of England, Sussex by the sea; and he has reason to know well how the growth of modern transport has left precious few parts of the countryside free from the ubiquitous curiosity of the tourist and the eager sightseer. And can we complain? The bookstalls are crowded with volumes about rediscovering London, England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Mr. S. P. B. Mais acts as guide to parties numbered in hundreds who visit the beauty spots of the Downs and the Home Counties. Every year there are fewer places where one can be sure of avoiding the invading hordes of the charabanc and the special excursion train. Skilful journalists and lecturers are making a good business of finding and selling the secrets of unfrequented Britain, selling them wholesale to newspapers and the B.B.C., who retail them to possessors of modest purses like you and me. There is really no sound argument against this development in principle. It will be a pity if any lovely meadows are trampled down or any woods disfigured with litter—but that won't happen of necessity. It is only selfishness which resents invasion of a coveted privacy, when the privacy is in a corner of the open country. And what incalculably beneficial results are accruing from this movement! First of all there are the benefits of physical health involved in more and more fresh-air and exercise. Then there are the mental and spiritual benefits of widened horizons and broadened minds—more especially when the hikers or the tourists go far afield and come across customs and points of view differing markedly from their own. Then there is, of course, the economic side of the question, the financial benefits brought by visitors to the districts they frequent. This is a matter which has its international aspect as well as its repercussions within our own shores. It has a social side too, exclusive country sport is being democratised and class barriers broken down.

All this tourist business involves a great deal more than might be apparent at first glance. It is not only a matter of you and me seeing a lot more of our own and other countries, and not minding if we find squads of other folks eating buns and bananas in our pet corner of uncharted woodland. Tourism is or ought to be a subject for wise reflection and provident planning. It has its status as a factor in the balance of payments between nations; it has its place of importance as a means of fostering friendship between them. Some countries, like Switzerland, have specialized in it and made the tourist industry their main concern as a nation; others are remarkably alive to possibilities.

"What do they know of England, who only England know?" asked another poet. How many of us have learned to appreciate the particular excellence of home the more after a sojourn abroad? Some have come back with the attitude towards foreign food of R.L.S.'s child—"You have curious things to eat, I am fed on proper meat," but others have been enabled to enrich and expand their family bill of fare as well as their mental outlook. It has strange repercussions, this "mobility" of the modern age. It may do anything from effecting a revolution in our kitchens to strengthening the hand of the peacemakers at a disarmament conference!

D. C. T.

III—The Open Road

What follows is the text of a B.B.C. talk by the Editor of the TOC H JOURNAL, broadcast on May 8 this year specially for secondary schools. Some of it may suit older children!

I DARE say some of you remember a *Punch* picture a year or so ago of a tramp who comes upon a friend of his sitting disconsolately, with his bundle beside him, on the edge of a country road. "'Ullo, Bill," he says, "you 'ikin'?" To which his Cockney friend replies, a bit grimly, "Yus, Jim—'ikin' all over." And so, first of all, I want to remind you that there are thousands of men "on the road," as they call it, day in, day out—walking, but not for pleasure. I have known some of them well, talked with them for hours, shared their basin of tea (no milk but lots of sugar) and been beaten by them at their favourite game of dominoes. Many of them have been "on the road" for years; they don't want a regular job, and if you manage to get them one they won't keep it for more than a day or two. Generous and happy-go-lucky, they live from one day to another; they have nothing to look forward to but an old age which is nearly always utterly miserable. But I ask you to remember also that in these hard times there are thousands of men of another kind "on the road"—young men, among them boys no older than some of those who are listening this afternoon, without prospects of work, fed up with hanging about at home, where they are becoming a burden, they take to the road to seek their fortune or at least a relief from monotony, and, if no one gives them a hand in time, many of them will join the ranks of the professional tramp. This is a tragic and an urgent business. Walking has problems as well as pleasures. Don't merely despise the men you see shabbily dressed and called 'tramps.' Their lot is often desperately hard and some day *you* may have a chance of making it easier.

The Menace of Machinery

But now something about your own walking—for I hope it will be your choice to walk. There is nothing so simple, so strenuous, so full of rewards of many kinds. First—about simplicity. Walking is obviously the oldest and simplest form of exercise known to mankind. Our remote ancestors may have done it on all fours—but perhaps that hardly counts. But imagine the feelings of the first human being who found that he could stand on his hind legs and face the sky; as he shambled forward he must have discovered a queer new delight—the pleasure of walking. Ever since then, down all the ages, everywhere in the world, babies have made this delightful discovery and men and women have gone on doing it. Nowadays I sometimes meet people, even young people, who say that "they never walk if they can help it." And as I see them drifting rapidly about the country, on padded seats, in neat glass cases propelled by petrol, I have a haunting fear that they will eventually revert to something less than men and women. They won't go back to all fours, but perhaps their great grandchildren will come into the world on four wheels instead of legs. In this wonderful mechanical age of ours a great number of men and women have to spend all their working hours with machinery; and heaps of them seem to want to spend all their leisure time with it too. The internal combustion engine is a splendid servant, but it has become the tyrannous master of some of us: don't let it get *you* down.

Walking—and 'Hiking'

If walking is so simple, don't complicate it. A year or two ago, certain newspapers discovered a new form of sport called "hiking." They forgot that the word itself was commonly used in England in the 14th century; and that the thing itself began long before the first history book was written. They forced the public to take it up: in other words, it was a successful 'stunt.' The results were striking and of great advertising value to railways, restaurant-keepers, publishers, purveyors of shorts and zip fasteners. Battalions of people were deposited at remote spots by special trains for "mystery hikes." Swarms of them crashed through the woods on a Sunday afternoon and, like locusts, removed every bluebell; or in mass formation at moonrise surrounded a copse to scare the nightingales. The countryside was made much brighter with bottles and silver paper. In fact it was good business—while it lasted. In this form I don't honestly think it is going to last much longer: it is too complicated. An army, properly trained and equipped can do mass-walking (though it is hard work, as soldiers will tell you) but they do it with a recognised "march discipline." A horde of people, untrained and often unfit, is a very different thing from a regiment. They may swarm across country, on an odd afternoon and call it 'hiking'—but it isn't real walking.

One good thing this sudden 'hiking' craze has done: it has led quite a lot of people who took it up as a novelty to join the ranks of real walkers. And the real walkers go on, as they have always done and will always do. Their numbers are very great in any case. The Federation of Rambling Clubs in London alone counts some 10,000 members, and greater numbers than those pour out of the Clubs in the great industrial cities of the North and Midlands to seek the Yorkshire moors or Derbyshire dales.

'Fancy Free'

But now, in simplest terms, how do you become a real walker? The answer is—just walk. You have no need to join any sort of club in order to do that—though some of you may find that membership of a club helps. You have no need to wear any special kind of uniform—though many of you may enjoy doing so. Just walk, in the way that suits you best.

I would say, personally, choose one or two or three friends—the sort of friends who don't mind getting wet, who sing louder as they get more tired, who won't get grumpy under any conditions, or drop out or let you down. Nearly all of us fail occasionally in these things—and a week's walking finds out our weak spots and shows us up to our friends. This may be one reason (though it's not the only one) why some people prefer walking alone.

Then I would say, plan your walk just as you like best. Some people work it all out in detail on maps and with books, calculating the mileage, the exact route and the goal of each day's journey. Others set out into the blue, walking thirty miles one day and five the next, delighting in the unexpected, changing their minds on the way, content to stop each evening at any place which looks attractive or at any time when they are hungry. It is a matter largely of temperament: make your plans, or don't make them, to suit yourself.

A Question of Kit

And then there is the question of kit—for I think you want me to be a little practical. Again I would say wear whatever you find most comfortable and take whatever suits you—within limits. The man who invited me to walk across the Pyrenees with him for the first time exhorted me to dress sensibly. So I took a lot of trouble over shirts and shorts and invented some ingenious leather braces to ease the weight of my pack. When we met at Victoria Station to start, *he* turned up in his second-best office suit and a bowler hat. We both reached the peaks of the Pyrenees equally well—and hung his bowler on the top as a monument to our adventure.

This being so, I am not going to presume to advise you in detail about clothes or luggage. There are plenty of little handbooks about these things, but I don't think you need worry too much about what they say. Only experience can tell you what suits you best about boots or shoes or sandals, shorts or skirts or plus fours, this kind of rucksack, or stick, and that. Some of the best walkers I know are the least conspicuous; they set out for a hard twenty miles as if they were going round the corner to post a letter. On the other hand, if you really feel like it, don't shrink from being a little picturesque. Put a feather in your hat, or a flower, if that is your mood. For years I have worn a pair of embroidered Tyrolean braces for walking. My friends start by laughing at them, and then ask where they can get a pair. The first thing to avoid is discomfort, the second is making a fright of yourself knowingly. Both spell misery.

—and Expense

So far I have been trying to say that walking should be simple and can't help being strenuous. It can also be expensive, but it needn't be. Carry a tent if you like—but remember that camping is a difficult art in itself and I mustn't begin to discuss it now. But I will give you one tip about where to stay at night. England and Scotland and Ireland, as well as a dozen European countries, now have their Youth Hostels Associations. In the last three years these simple but really jolly hostels have sprung up, a reasonable day's walk from one another, nearly all over England—round Snowdon and through the Lakes, over the Yorkshire moors and the Peak District, across the hills of Mid and South Wales, along the Cotswolds and the South Downs and the Roman Wall, in the valleys of Thames and Wye, on Dartmoor or the Cornish coast. A good bed in any of these costs one shilling a night—but you must be a member of the Association, which will cost you half-a-crown a year, if under 25; five shillings if over. Here is the address—The Youth Hostels Association, 18, Bridge Road, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. Membership entitles you to use the hostels in most other countries also.

The Rewards of Walking

And now, what about the rewards of walking? How can I, or any other walker, count all the riches we have found? You will never know the riches of your own country, or even of your own county, until you walk about over it. Do you know where the moorhen nests in that slow Suffolk stream and how the church tower looks

down over it? The last time I passed that way was in a car driven by a friend. As we raced by I just had time to say to myself "That's Blythburgh—that was"; and his only remark was "Yes, very pretty—but she's not pulling so well as usual this afternoon." With a car you can see most of the English Cathedrals in a week and yet not know the first real thing about one of them—how the grand tower of Canterbury lifts into the sky as you draw slowly nearer, how Wells nestles in the valley as you come down over Mendip. Only by the quiet exercise of walking, going or stopping at any moment as you please, can you learn the *feeling* of the land, its hard rock and soft turf and rough heather; or catch every moment of the pageant of the sky from dawn to starlight; or feel the fullness of the sun soaking into you and the wind cutting your skin; or find the secret places where snowdrops or the Royal Fern grow; or learn the different notes of robin and wren. The mind wants time to work and the eyes are far slower than the camera. It is the walking pace that gives time to mind and eyes to collect a whole gallery of pictures which last a lifetime. There are the great moments of sight—sunrise on the top of Appennine, with all the plain of Tuscany still in the dusk below you; the jagged ridge of the Pyrenees with the sun setting over the tiny Republic of Andorra, seen at a glance; the smaller surprises, like the first glimpse of Tintern as you tramp up the Wye, or the towers of Jumièges at the bend of the Seine. And then the sounds which don't die away in memory—the silence, so deep that we heard it, as we pitched our tent in a forest in Auvergne; the German song we sang as we climbed the steep street of Hohnstein in Saxony, to supper. And then the quite *small* things—the Christmas roses breaking through the snow on the slopes of Lake Garda; the trout we saw—and had for supper—at Schliersee; even the cheesemites in that immortal piece of Stilton which we lunched on, sitting against a buttress of the great Somerset tower of Huish Episcopi. Not least the *discomforts* of walking are pleasant to remember—aching muscles at the end of a fine, hard day, the hailstorm in Dorset, the blazing heat in Lombardy, being lost at night in a thunderstorm in Tyrol, and on Styhead Pass in a cloud. But I mustn't force *my* picture gallery on you: you must walk and collect your own.

And so I say—start walking, if you haven't started already. Go and discover England: you have no idea of its loveliness and its fascinating variety, nor yet of the series of minor adventures it holds, until you walk in it. And when you discover it thus, you can't help falling hopelessly and permanently in love with it. And if you love it like that, you will never harm it, or spoil it for other people: you will make up your minds that it must be protected from selfish encroachment and careless planning and hideous building. We walkers can do a great deal to help public opinion about all that.

I have no time to speak of other great rewards of walking—its wonderful comradeship of the road, its great opportunities for getting to know people of other kinds and of other nations. There is no simpler and sounder way of making friendships or of helping forward the peace of the world. Take your problems for a walk and share them with others as you go. *Solvitur ambulando*, says the Latin proverb: things *are* solved by walking.

And now—to all my listeners—the best luck of the road this summer!

TOC H TRAVELLERS' TALES

With Tubby in Africa—III.

Last month we traced TUBBY and JOHN GRAHAM starting back from Baghdad, visiting Egypt and stirring Toc H there, passing down the East Coast to visit Kenya and Uganda, and arriving in Rhodesia, whence they have since gone to the Union of South Africa.

In Northern and Southern Rhodesia

JOHN GRAHAM writes from Umtali, Southern Rhodesia on June 24:—

I HAVE a feeling I was rather mean over my account of Toc H in a Copper Belt (see *July JOURNAL*, p. 298). This phrase, incidentally, is not a description of Tubby trying out a new slimming process; a copper belt out here means a series of Mines making roughly a gross profit of £60,000 a month each. Where the profit goes no one has yet decided, but it certainly doesn't appear to be in the direction of helping Toc H on its feet. Of course, we heard from everyone that "Toc H here has its own peculiar difficulties." Have you ever met a unit which hasn't? And then the good chaps corner you and tell you that theirs is a land of wide open spaces and people are continually moving to and fro. Of course they've never been to Tower Hill! And that is probably one of the reasons why Toc H is so weak; but the big main reason is lack of staff! staff! How could one harried clerk in York run units in South Wales coalfields and in Edinburgh and Glasgow, with no towns in between into the bargain? And yet that is the equivalent of what Rhodesia is expecting of its present Secretary. One word more, while I remember, on BROKEN HILL; at Broken Hill is Clayton Park, the evidence of great activity in earlier days. On our return here a second time, a vast crowd of about six watched Tubby plant a tree in his own Park; the immediate extinction of the tree was fully provided against by pouring on its roots about a tankful of water—I never knew water played to big a part in tree-planting. And then Tubby surprised a party of children by inaugurating newly-mended swings and a see-saw. Shouts of glee rose as he see-sawed with five children on the other end; and the Park really seemed

to be well and truly used by the younger element in Broken Hill—a rather good concrete example of the work of Toc H being handed on to the benefit of people who didn't even know of its existence. The Unit may be feeble for a moment, but its fruits abide. And that, after all, is *the important thing*. The next sentence or so should go into raptures over the Victoria Falls; but I don't see that that would do much good; you need roughly a century to start appreciating them and even then trying to describe them would be rather like re-writing *Hamlet*. The Branch at LIVINGSTONE—six miles from the Falls—was rather appropriately, perhaps, in low waters—but they have a good reason for being so; half their membership and half everything in the Town has moved out to the new Capital of Northern Rhodesia, a hundred or so miles up the line, and left them badly depleted.

A day or two there and then on to BULAWAYO, where the Branch not only turned out a dozen cheery souls to greet us at 6.30 a.m., but also provided us with a first-rate supper and guest night, and presented Tubby with a lamp—not unlike that outside "42" in shape—painted with various coats of arms by the members; a very skilful and delicate bit of work. More than these, they held a Rededication Service the first evening we were there, and showed real signs of depth, humour, keenness and honest happiness about life in general. This was cheering—I could have done with a week at Bulawayo, though it was cold and grey and windy while we were there; and moreover we held one of the best L.W.H. meetings yet devised by going in a compact body to see the immortal Ralph Lynn in *A Cuckoo in the Nest*—after a talk from Tubby, mind you. I hope nobody will take this hint too seriously and consider "Filmgoing" as a

"type of meeting" in the text book sense; only excusable in the Colonies, I expect; but there very, very welcome.

Up the line from here to GWELO (pronounced with two 'l's' please) and QUE QUE (not pronounced at all, if you're wise); we spent two days in Gwelo, where it was a trifle warmer; as evidence of which is the fact, sworn to by Tubby, that while he was writing letters in his bedroom, so large a bee came in through the window and sat on the bed that it bent the mattress and made the springs creak. These two units were small and keen; though there is no one to teach or help or keep continuity; staff! staff! staff!—they all cry aloud for staff. From Gwelo we puffed up a branch line to the "unsolved mystery of Rhodesia"—the Zimbabwe ruins. We ran into a species of weather here generally attributed to Scotland, and known locally as a "guti"; that is to say, a kind of persistent drizzle which keeps on coming on and off, just as you particularly hoped it would be off and *vice versa*. We staggered to a miserable pile of very skilful but obviously ancient brickwork and tried to read the guide book; in so doing we succeeded in solving one mystery—that King Solomon (or whoever built the place) was misguided enough to make no such provisions for shelter as a roof. Consequently we gave up every hope of keeping dry, came out into the open and it drizzled, and we finally slunk back, the guide book's glossy pages all stuck together, and slept in our train compartments to make up for short nights. From here we chuffed back to Gwelo, and on to SALISBURY by the fourth night train in a week! and arrived there about 6 a.m., also the fourth time this week we had greeted the dawn by stepping off a Rhodesian train—things one is not sorry to step off as a rule, though dawn as a zero hour has its disadvantages. Breakfast here (how could that interest anyone, except as a sidelight on the hospitality of Toc H?) and on again to UMTALI in a train which took twelve hours to do the journey and had no dining-car. We, therefore, subsisted for once—and very welcome too—on bread and

cheese—cheese which Tubby insisted on cutting into strips with a pair of scissors, a thing you seldom see done even in these wild and woolly parts.

UMTALI is a lovely place, and Toc H thrives and publishes its own journal, has its own hall, and is at present building a public swimming bath. Meetings galore came off here and there is a quite decent evidence of divine discontent.

"Real J.A.M."

At Umtali also lives Colonel J. A. METHUEN, D.S.O., Foundation Member of Toc H. The story of Tubby's earliest meeting with him in Poperinghe was first told in the June JOURNAL, 1925, under the title "Real J.A.M."; it was repeated in December JOURNAL, 1933, on the occasion of OWEN WATKIN's meeting with him at UMTALI. The account also contained a drawing of the memorial, a huge stone cross, erected by Col. METHUEN to African natives who fell in the War. TUBBY now contributes the following, which was printed in a Rhodesian newspaper. It was written in the train from Salisbury to Umtali on June 23.

We are, as usual, in a Rhodesian train, this time the only coach, the only passengers. We're making for my Mecca of Umtali, which I have had in mind for donkey's years.

I have had it in mind for the most simple reason; which you are free to laugh at or to condemn. It is not that Umtali is well known to me as the Garden City of Southern Rhodesia or as the Eastern Gateway of the Southern State. It is not because it houses famous folk like the father and mother of Kingsley Fairbridge, whose name is blessed throughout Australia, or F. C. Burgess, who came out in '57, or Ben Moodie, the last of the Melsetter Moodies from Orkney, and survivor of a famous pioneer trek.

It is not that I may be privileged to meet such men and others of their calibre. Nor yet, while I am steadfastly purposed to see the Toc H Hall and all therein—being a member of that queer concern, and rather keen about it now and then . . .

Have you yet guessed, or have you given

up reading? Does all this strike you as poor prose and still worse sentiment?

* * * *

For once I do not care for you or your expression of distaste. Another man than you is in my mind, and I am going to see him in an hour! We have not met since 1916, when we knew each other but for a day; but that day was enough to win me utterly. I am content he should be judged by it.

It was in Poperinghe, in Talbot House.

I had just shuffled across the Rue de Pots, according to my wont, to send a signal. A new Brigade Headquarters had moved into the billets, and their signal section had taken over the little crowded office at the corner. I went in gingerly, prepared to perjure my chaplaincy (temporary 4th class) in order to achieve the despatch of a message to Neville Talbot. Signals in war are meant to be kept clear for guns and raids and warlike operations. While I was persuading the Signal Sergeant that my necessity was vital to the tenure of the Salient, the inner door gave way; the Colonel entered.

* * * *

I say the door gave way; things far more stubborn gave way to Colonel Methuen in his prime.

"Hullo Padre," he said, "what are you up to with my signallers?"

I breathed a prayer and exuded an apology.

"All right," he said, "that's quite all right. Don't worry. But what are you going to do for us in return? I've heard of Talbot House. When are your services? We haven't had a chance for a long time."

I rattled off the times of Evensong, and added in parsonic undertone the times of daily Celebration. I needn't have employed the undertone. I might have left the word to Edmund Blunden.

The Colonel used no undertone at all.

"That's good," he said, "I'll be there 7 a.m. to-morrow. I think a few of us would like to come. Sergeant, arrange the duties, if you please, so that your lads can be there if they wish. Which of them are

confirmed? Are you? Are you? That's right—" to one, and "Why not?" to another; "D'you want to be? The padre will arrange it."

* * * *

When written down, the episode sounds formal, like undue influence or even compulsion. But then you don't know your Colonel Methuen!—whom I'm about to see again at last, to-night, after these eighteen years.

Out of the Signal Section, the next morning, the Sergeant and some others came to worship. If in their human frailty, a portion of their worship was transferred from the Great Master to a figure kneeling with several of his officers, I don't think Our Lord resented it. There is a quality residing in such men at times like that, which is not less divine, because so human. Maybe the men were ill-prepared and ignorant, but so were the Twelve in the Upper Room.

And Confirmation candidates? O yes! The signallers brought others. The Brigade Padre and I—old friends—had classes especially for the 17th K.R.R., who happened to have struck an opportunity when Bishop Gwynne could come to the Old House.

* * * *

I have not seen the Colonel since that day. He and I meet in a few moments' time. We've written to each other twice a year, and he has done his damndest for Toc H, of which he was for a long time the only member in the Rhodesias. He must be old by now; but so am I.

Are there men elsewhere who have so great reason for thankfulness and sense of God's supremacy as I have now in this Rhodesian train? Alas, the signallers are most of them gone hence, not coming home. Their bodies by now are dust. Dead men surround the meeting of us two; men whom he led and loved, men whom I tried to teach a little while, men whom Christ fed with His immortal food. So we two meet.

Umtali! Here it is!

And here's the Colonel, white haired . . .

But his handshake! . . .

TUBBY.

Progress in Durban

TUBBY made his first stay in the Union at Durban. On arrival there he was suffering from the strain of his long journeys since leaving England in mid-April and was ordered a fortnight's rest. That this was not idleness is shown by the following paragraph from the Times: "DURBAN, July 26—The cause of Toc H in Natal was furthered by a private meeting convened by Lord Clarendon, the Governor-General, at King's House, yesterday. At the conclusion of the meeting,

Lord Clarendon sent the following telegram to the Prince of Wales:—'I am happy to inform you that at a meeting in Durban convened by me as president of Toc H, the Body of Senior Friends which was then established has undertaken the permanent financial structure of the work in Natal. Their unanimous resolution pledged adequate provision for one full-time Pilot and, in due course, freehold headquarters in Durban'."

Since then TUBBY has arrived in Cape Town, much rested, and is carrying on with a modified programme.

With "Regron" in Australia—III.

In their first dispatch, in the June JOURNAL, 'REGRON' (REX CALKIN, STUART GREENACRE and RONNIE WRAITH) described their visits to Western Australia and South Australia; in their second dispatch, in July, their impression of Toc H in Victoria and Tasmania. They now complete the 'once-over' of Toc H in the Commonwealth by a brief survey of New South Wales and Queensland. They record a momentous Council Meeting.

May 25, 1934.

We have visited NEW SOUTH WALES.

Toc H in SYDNEY has had a tragic history—a tale of disappointments and internal problems which have lasted over many years. It was all the more refreshing to discover there a team of men as happy and as faithful as though theirs had been a history of unqualified success. The State Executive Committee is young, vigorous and cheerful; they have left the past behind, and are fully equal to the calls of future development. Behind them, or rather with them, in all their undertakings is the saint and faithful servant of Toc H, Sir John Harvey, held back only by failing health from his natural place as their leader in the field of action.

The work accomplished by this team of men in their private time is nothing less than wonderful. It would have been stout work to have maintained the State office in a state of efficient working; it is a positive achievement that they have, in addition, visited with regularity all the country units, on journeys varying from 80 to 150 miles from Sydney, with encouragement, advice and news from the outside world.

There are three Branches in this State; NEWCASTLE, a solid and successful unit in a big industrial city; SYDNEY CENTRAL, a small Branch with a good personnel; and COBAR, five hundred miles west, about which knowledge is limited to correspondence. Besides these are seventeen Groups, eight in the suburbs of Sydney, two in the suburbs of Newcastle, and seven in the country. The country units have again commanded our respect, partly because of their very names (who could resist Wallerawang, Mittagong and Cullen Bullen?), but mainly because they have been the means of bringing sweetness and light into little communities which had hitherto, they tell us, been next to moribund. Australia has proved beyond all shadow of doubt, the case for "Toc H in the Countryside." We do not yet know the suburban units well enough to speak of them.

The movement has spread somewhat oddly in this State. In Bathurst, for example, or Lithgow, both large towns in the mid-western district, Toc H does not exist. A few miles away, in some impossibly out-of-the-way mountain village, is a thriving unit.

We have been exceptionally happy in SYDNEY. The men, though few in number, are superb, and where tragedy had followed tragedy until you would expect them to be disappointed and perhaps depressed, the spirit of laughter is abroad, and all their thoughts are on the future which they plan to build.

Toc H in QUEENSLAND is no more than a beginning. There are seven units only—the equal of an English District, save that in this case the distance between the two furthest units (Brisbane and Townsville) is not 8 miles, nor 18, but 800! Two of us made the trip up to this State and visited three units—BRISBANE, NEWMARKET and MARYBOROUGH. A visit to the more distant ones was impracticable, and the rest of our time was spent in meeting the State Council and the leaders in Brisbane. Our best chance of usefulness clearly lay in bringing these few men, on whom rests the responsibility for future development, into touch with ideas, developments and methods from England and from the other States, since Queensland, with its small numbers and huge distances, is singularly out of touch with the main stream of family life.

We have so far tried to offer to the columns of the JOURNAL, in as few words as possible, an estimate of Toc H in each individual State. There will follow in a later mail some account of the Federal Festival and Council Meeting which is being held in Sydney from May 28 to June 4.

“REGRON.”

The Federal Festival

June 4, 1934.

We are accustomed at Home to a Central Council Meeting which occupies an afternoon in April, and to a Festival which lasts a brief week-end. In Australia they do things differently. When you have travelled 2,750 miles (the distance from Perth to Sydney by train, and incidentally the distance from London to Buda-Pest), and back again, as five men and three women did this year, you look for something more solid and satisfying than our brief English excursions give.

The Australian Federal Council has just finished its Annual Meeting, which lasted from Tuesday, May 29, to Saturday, June 2; during its deliberations there met also an informal conference of all the members present who were not actually representing their State in Council. The week-end which followed this formed the natural climax of the Festival week, although it was not until Tuesday that they all departed. This is an attempt to set out briefly some of the things which have happened.

* * * *

The Festival. The Public Guest Night in Sydney Town Hall was a little gem of organisation on the part of New South WALES. It went through with perfect precision and perfect timing. As a result of attention to detail the concluding pageantry and ceremonial surrounding “Light” was really solemn and stirring, causing none of the mental discomfort which may sometimes be experienced. There was more music of the concert kind than normally happens in English Festivals, but this was due in part to two important things, both new to us; firstly, the proportion of Toc H members to their guests was very small indeed (it was no mean achievement for a small body like Toc H, N.S.W., to have taken Sydney Town Hall at all); secondly, the Guest Night was broadcast from beginning to end. There were two speakers, Lieut.-Colonel The Honourable M. F. Bruxner, the Deputy Premier of New South Wales, and Padre Herbert Leggate. Arthur Davis, a Sydney member, gave a finished performance as Chairman of the evening, in the absence of two well-loved leaders of Toc H, Captain Frank Marriott of Tasmania, President of Toc H, Australia, and Sir John Harvey, President of Toc H, N.S.W.

* * * *

The Conference. Although interest tended to centre on the Council Meeting, it was the Conference that really merited the attention of the multitude, for Conference discussed the family life of Toc H in many of its

aspects, whilst in the adjoining room legalists and constitutionalists chuckled (or wept) over their absorbing pastime. Many familiar things were talked about by the forty or so men who attended; among them was an interesting discussion on the part which Toc H might now be playing in public life, ably led by a Victorian Branch, ably safeguarded from dullness or over-conscientiousness by Herbert Leggate, who had temporarily absented himself from Council.

Naturally a great deal of petty detail was discussed, but on the whole the quality was good. Comparisons are odious, but sometimes interesting, and it is not certain that forty men gathered fortuitously from every part of Toc H, Great Britain, could have achieved a more intelligent result.

* * * *

The Council. The business before Council this year was exceptionally interesting and important, in so far as it is possible to apply those words to legal and constitutional matters in Toc H.

It is worth recalling the fact that Toc H, Australia, has been almost from its inception a movement quite independent, constitutionally, from Toc H in the rest of the world; to be quite accurate there have been six legally separate bodies, one in each Australian State. In the minds of some people this legal separation has caused a separation in thought and spirit. The whole question of the relationship with their founders was discussed by the Federal Council of 1933, who asked Toc H Headquarters to offer their opinion. Headquarters replied by sending our team out to Australia, to strengthen the personal ties, and at the same time suggested constitutional changes which might make the "one-ness" permanent. It was the discussion of these changes which has occupied Council during the past week.

Briefly, the decisions resulting from the Council's deliberations have been as follows:

1. To seek *legal* union between Toc H in Australia and Toc H Incorporated.
2. To bring the system of State self-

government more closely into line with the similar system in the English Areas.

3. To set up, as a necessary liaison between the States, and as a channel for the expression of Toc H in the whole Commonwealth, an Australian Executive, consisting of one man from each State, with three additional members at the Federal centre (henceforward to be ADELAIDE), one of whom is to be appointed by the Central Executive in England. This Executive will also act as an active liaison between Toc H, Australia, and the parent body.

Even with four days in which to meet, there was no time for the Federal Council to decide upon anything but broad principles; a mass of detail has still to be sifted; even the statement given above does not pretend to be a complete, or even technically accurate, account of what has taken place. But it is sufficient to show an advance. It means nothing less than that Toc H is now to be, in letter as well as in spirit, a world-wide family; it means that Toc H, in England and in Australia, will in future have the free unfettered benefit of one another's thought and experience.

A thing which impressed us greatly was the amount of money and time (clearly for most people their annual holiday time) which men have been prepared to spend on coming to Sydney. For an English member it would be instructive to sit down in front of a map of Australia, with distances between capital cities clearly marked, and to ponder the fact that over fifty men came to Sydney from in and around the other capitals. Perhaps it is partly the holiday spirit which makes this week of Council, Conference and Festival such fun. A "Harbour picnic," one of the items of the week, has a delicious sound, and is in happy contrast to constitutions. Sydney, they say, is three hours ahead of Perth—"our 'arbour," "our bridge," and "our Bradman." The beauty of the first has enchanted us; the majesty of the second has thrilled us; only the third makes us a little homesick, for even as we write he is casting the magic of his art over an English field, on an English summer day.

With Bob Slater in the Far East

In 1929 Rev. R. H. L. SLATER, who was Padre of the Northern Area and had lived at Mark XVIII Newcastle since its opening in 1925, left the staff to go to work in a college at Rangon. He has been mainly responsible for the start of Toc H in Burma.

Burma is China's neighbour and one of the nearest Toc H outposts. Ever since Bobs Ford told us at the Staff Conference last year of the new beginnings in China, I have hoped to pay a friendly call and the opportunity came with a University vacation and the hospitality of the Anglo-Saxon tankers.

At SINGAPORE I found Toc H meeting in a most thrilling place, a room in what was formerly a Chinese temple. A few days later I boarded a Norwegian oil tanker in the roads, and turned north to Shanghai.

SHANGHAI is like no other place in the East, with its riverful of battleships, junks and sampans; its mixture of races, its International town and its French town and Chinese town; its drab, muddy pavements and factory walls reminiscent of Teeside when it rains; its imposing line of banks and hotels on the bund; its electric night signs; and nowadays, glory be, its very lively and enthusiastic Toc H. For headquarters there is an Army Hut called, if you please, "The Bobsford Hut," furnished with a bar almost as long as the famous bar in the Shanghai club (said to be the longest in the world), and the only tuneful piano I've ever known in my Toc H wanderings. Most of the members are bachelors, and they not only meet at the 'Bobsford,' but some of them also meet once a week for lunch in one of the town cafes. They did not talk much about their jobs, but after I had left Shanghai, I met some young sailormen who told me what Toc H had been too modest to parade.

North country members may be interested to hear of a service in which I used the travelling Communion Set with which they presented me when I first left England. It was held on the little coastal steamer on the way from Shanghai to Hong Kong. Fog bound, we had been at anchor for thirty-six hours. We carried an armed guard, for this part of the coast is haunted by pirates.

Overnight I had heard the familiar Geordie dialect, unearthed a one-time server from St. George's, Cullercoats, and a sailorman's wife from South Shields, and the result was a service in the tiny little dining-room.

HONG KONG is a Toc H unit with exceptional responsibilities. It is a commercial centre, and there is the same need and opportunity as in other similar centres out East. But it is also a Navy base. And, thirdly, it may, in the future, through Chinese Christian members, be able to influence the whole life of China. For instance, one of the British Padres in Hong Kong had been loaned to the Canton Government as Boy Scout adviser for six months . . . an instance of the kind of way in which members of the British colony may be able to help in the development of the new China. I found the Hong Kong members smaller in numbers than Shanghai, but much encouraged by Bags' visit, a week previous to mine, and full of new enthusiasm and plans for the future.

On the return journey (oil tanker *Solens*) I called at Miri, an oilfield in Borneo. An interesting suggestion was made while discussing the possibility of starting Toc H there. Miri is a delightful place. It is an exiled community, but an exile without poverty. Some of the exiles felt they were having a better time than many of the folks at home in, for instance, the depressed areas, and that they would like to link up with units in such areas and give financial support to their activities. And so home to Burma, singing *Te Deum*, my little faith rebuked. I had heard of the beginnings in China. I did not realise they were so good. "Padre," said a business man in Shanghai, "don't speak of retiring. I don't want to leave this part of the world. This is where the world's history will be shaped in the future." Maybe. At any rate, it is good to know that Toc H is there to take some share in the shaping of it.

BOB SLATER.

THE CHILDREN'S BEACH



VISIBLY, Tubby's dream of Tower Hill, made beautiful and dedicated once more to the people of London City as a playground, begins to come true. The far-reaching nature of it, and heavy obstacles to be surmounted were indicated in last December's JOURNAL. But already some of the property is in the hands of 'Tower Hill Improvement'; plans go forward and some objectives are measurably nearer being reached. Monday, July 23, saw one undertaking of the scheme fulfilled: it will always remain a great day for the children of the City and of the adjoining Borough of Stepney.

It began with pageantry such as the authorities of London can contrive as well as any city in the world and which the Londoner expects and loves. The precincts of the Tower were crowded with sightseers in Summer dresses, 'up from the country'; the scarlet sentries were marching up and down; a bugle was blown and sharp words of command were heard—this was the normal life of the Tower on any afternoon. In the middle of this, on the green lawn, under the trees, in front of the ancient King's House, a tea party was going on. Top-hats and some gay frocks, and among the company the Lieutenant of the Tower in full uniform and the Bishop of London in his robes, scarlet and white and black, and purple cap. And suddenly, with a great clatter of hoofs and clink of metal and rumble of heavy wheels on the stone roadway, the pageantry of the City of London broke into the scene and became its centre. Mounted police and the City Marshal in scarlet and gold on horseback; a coach containing the Sheriffs and their ladies; a second with the Mayor of Stepney; then the great carriage, drawn by four huge horses, with my Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, the Remembrancer in wig and gown, the Sword-bearer in his immense brown fur hat, the coachman on the box, with powdered wig, the bea- dles in red and gold to the heels, up behind. It was too solid in the afternoon sun to be Cinderella's wedding

or a Mid-summer Night's Dream, but it was as exciting to the child which, mercifully, is in all of us.

The procession on foot was formed and wound slowly down the lane between the grey walls of the tower, under the archway in its huge curtain-wall and on to the quay beside the Thames. And there it halted, a bright patch of colour and gleaming gold, in the heart of the crowd which awaited it. The crowd was mainly children, for it was their day and event. We had short speeches, with the time-honoured phrases of dignity, from Lord Wakefield, the Lieutenant of the Tower, the Lord Mayor, the Mayor of Stepney. The petition to the King that he would allow the children of London and Stepney free access for ever to the foreshore of his Royal Palace, the fortress of the Tower, was read, and his gracious reply was received. Then, in one sentence, Lord Wakefield declared the beach open, and in another promised to secure the safety of the children who should use this playground; the Bishop of London dedicated it with a short prayer.

And then the great moment arrived. Lord Wakefield, President of Tower Hill Improvement, stepped forward and, with an unfeigned happiness in his face which no one could miss who was near him, cut the ribbon at the head of the new stairs to the Beach. An avalanche of children poured down the

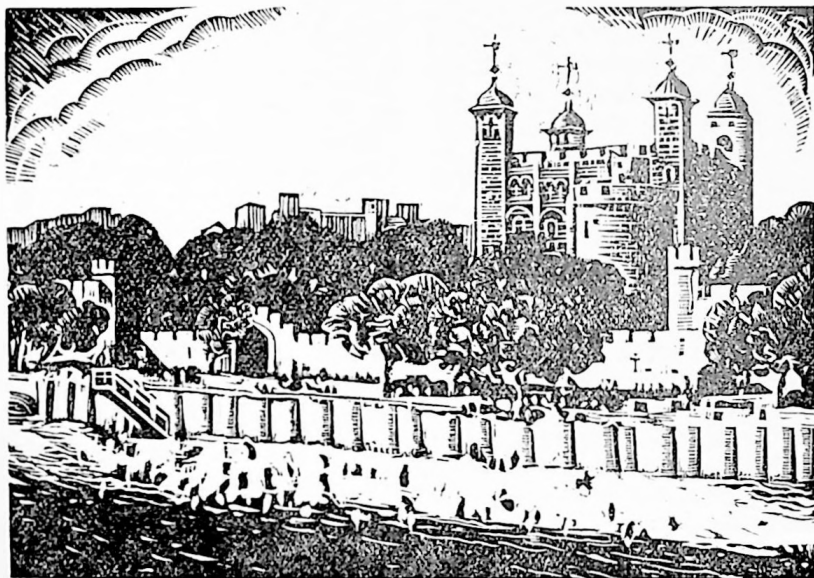


steps on to the shingle, a dense crowd of children lining Tower Bridge in the background broke into a cheer and all the tugs on the River answered them with hoots of joy; the ex-service band (long organised by Tubby on the Hill, and maintained by Lord Wakefield) played bravely; and everyone was smiling.

In five minutes the scene upon the shingle was the jolliest thing in the afternoon. Children were careering about between the rival magnets of a Punch and Judy Show and the point which issued buns and unlimited lemonade. And among them, laughing, walked the Lord Mayor, with his scarlet gown tucked up, and the Bishop, in his flowing robes, patting them on the head. At any minute it seemed as if the high dignitaries of the City of London might become ringleaders in a paddling party. Perhaps they were overawed by the man in the patrol boat, with his peaked cap and smart green and white oars, who hovered off

shore to keep order, the children's new guardian.

For how many centuries has the foreshore of London River been the delightful and often dangerous playground of city children? Here in this Royal preserve, beneath the guns of the Tower, such playing could only happen if the policeman was not looking or would spare himself the pains of a chase. But now the Beach has its charter for all children, its comfortable and lawful means of approach, its custodian for all time. Lord Wakefield, "one of the greatest hearts and far-seeing minds of our time" (as the Lord Mayor expressed it) has made this possible. But one man was missing on Monday afternoon whose happiness would have been more complete than any had he been there: he was many thousand miles from the scene of one of his dreams coming true. The inspiration of this act—so simple and so natural, now that it is done, that everyone wonders why it never came to pass before—was Tubby's alone. (*Picture on cover of SUPPLEMENT.*)



Drawings by A. A. Moore, cut on wood by Jack Paget.

THIS AND THAT

4.—The Church and the Arts

THE Church was, in a very real sense, the cradle of the arts. Under her kindly protection music, architecture, painting and the drama were early fostered and encouraged; and, although there have been periods of imperfect sympathy and even estrangement, there is still some vitality in the old alliance to-day. Some people are apt to regard art as a kind of useful general servant to worship—a provider of pleasant adornments and frills. This attitude involves a false understanding of art and of religion, of their relationship one to the other. "Art," as Sir D. Y. Cameron has put it, "is worship; not an aid to worship." This truth has been also well expressed by H. R. L. Sheppard, thus:—

"There is no such thing as religious or irreligious art; there is good and bad art, and there are also good and bad artists. When spiritual values are revealed on canvas, in music, in poetry and prose, it is because the revealer cannot hold back; he is compelled, constrained, on fire to express what he has seen and heard . . . The artist has no desire to do men good, only to declare God and goodness . . . The artist is essentially religious, and it is a proof of how little wisdom there is as yet amongst us that so many would deny the impeachment." D. H. Lawrence went so far as to exclaim, "One has to be so terribly religious to be an artist." So the whole problem of religion and art resolves itself into a question of co-operation between artists and those who are æsthetically sensitive in the fashioning of the means and place of worship. Since art is the practical 'witness' of one specially gifted section of the community, and another and larger section are helped by an atmosphere and an order which appeals to the æsthetic feelings, the devising and maintenance of such an appeal and atmosphere calls for the co-operation of imaginative creators in the plastic arts, in music and in literature. The most vivid way of presenting any story is to make it alive visually in mime or drama, and hence, from the earliest times the Church has made use of nativity and mystery plays, and enjoyed the aid of the dramatic producer's art.

If literary standards are not kept in view, prayers and preaching become rambling and amorphous; if musical values are ignored, ranting, sentimental melodies degrade the service of praise or imperfect harmonisation or renderings mar the beauty of the offered thanksgiving. One need not add the harm done by tawdry decorations, tendentious and inartistic missionary plays, however sincere.

I was once present at a discussion of the topic of "Beauty and Religion," led by an architect. Before reading his paper, he asked those present to write down in a few words what a church meant to them. When the definitions were read out the diversity of attitude was quite amazing. Some concentrated on the idea of worship and "kneeling before the Lord our Maker"; some talked of a centre of religious teaching and stressed the preacher; some drew attention to the need for making a church the centre of social work in the district. The manysidedness of a church architect's job was made strikingly clear. For it must be acknowledged that what helps some people to a reverent mood will hinder others. There is

room for a wide divergence of opinion. There may be as much beauty in the simplicity of a Friends' Meeting House as in the most ornate Lady Chapel in the world. It is perfectly possible to keep the musical part of a service strictly simple and yet have it as beautiful from the artistic point of view as the most elaborate Beethoven Mass. The question of cost enters in at once, as well as that of expert opinion versus popularity. Often in the very poorest districts money is liberally given for the beautifying of the shrines and maintenance of a choir or organ. Such lavishness may well call forth the same condemnation and merit the same defence as the action of Mary Magdalene with her precious ointment. From one point of view one can advance the same arguments for the beautification of churches and the artistic adornment of religious services as we do for the beautification of our own homes and the expenditure of taste and trouble in the choosing of those presents we give to those whom we love best. After all the expulsion of music and the other arts from the service of the church when it took place was usually carried out from motives of fear and for historical and even racial reasons. To-day the old estrangement is largely healed and the Church is playing a noble part as a comparatively progressive patron of all the arts again.

Some questions for discussion.

- (a) Should money be expended in beautifying churches in congested districts where social work badly needs support?
- (b) How far is it justifiable "to stoop to conquer" in the employment of art in church-music, church-drama and decoration?

Toc.

THE ELDER BRETHREN

Tom White: Merthyr Tydfil Group

TOM WHITE joined our Elder Brethren on May 9. He was the first member of the Merthyr Group to have been called. He was a well-known musician but the effects of War service cut short a brilliant career. He was articled to Sir Herbert Brewer, the organist of Gloucester Cathedral, and later went to Rugby School as Music Master. Despite severe trials and many years of suffering, Tom White was a worthy member of Toc H and always strove to "let his light shine before men."

G. H. S. Burrow: Reading Branch

GEORGE BURROW, who passed over on June 18, was one of the best-known figures in the Scout Movement in Berkshire. He was also a loyal member of Reading Branch of Toc H. As long ago as 1909, soon after B. P. started the Scouts, he was A.S.M. of a North London troop; in 1932 he was given the Order of the Silver Wolf, the highest

honour in the Scout Movement. Over-work, not only for Scouts but for all sorts of causes, especially those concerning men and boys, helped to shorten his life. A man of great charm, humility and faithfulness.

William James Bridgewater: Lye Branch

WILL, who passed over suddenly on June 22, was Chairman of the Lye Branch and one of its most loyal members. He was connected with practically every job the Branch has undertaken, and was a shining example of good fellowship and unselfish service. His genial personality will be missed.

George Pitman: Merthyr Tydfil Group

The Merthyr Group suffered another loss when George Pitman "passed on" on July 16. George was one of the oldest members of the Group, and in the early years laboured hard and well for its building. Indifferent health had prevented him attending frequently of late years, but he was, nevertheless, always keenly interested in Toc H.

MULTUM IN PARVO

❖ CUSACK WALTON has been appointed India Secretary of the Church Missionary Society in succession to the Rt. Rev. H. T. Bodden, the newly consecrated Bishop of Hull. This post has not previously been held by a layman. Recognising how much his heart is in this work the Central Executive agreed that it was right that he should accept. At the same time they congratulated him very heartily on the substantial results of his work with the Leprosy Appeal, and gratefully accepted his offer to retain general direction of the work from the Toc H side as Hon. Commissioner. It is possible for him to do this as he now has the assistance at H.Q. of HARRY WHITNEY (Oxford, Kandy).

❖ About September 10, after the Staff Conference, IAN FRASER is moving from Kendal to Glasgow as Secretary of Scotland (Central) Area. HARRY MYCROFT will take Ian's place in the Lakeland Division, and MICHAEL WESTROPP will return to Liverpool.

❖ The new Padre of the Northern Area is the Rev. ALLAN BOSTOCK, now Vicar of St. Mary's Bishophill Junior, York. He will arrive in Newcastle early in October.

❖ The Rev. JOHN H. OGILVIE, now an Assistant Minister at St. Columba's, Pont Street, London, S.W.1, has been appointed Padre in Scotland and will take up his work in the autumn. He was Padre of Hinaidi.

❖ The Rev. J. FLEMING SHEARER, Hon. District Padre of the Flint and Derbyshire District, and a Baptist minister in Old Colwyn, is joining the staff for a year from October, as part-time Area Padre in the North Wales Division Experimental Area.

❖ Padres NORMAN ROBOTTAN and A. F. WATTS have joined the London Staff; and Padre DAVID WALLACE has been asked, and has agreed, to remain for a further term.

❖ Congratulations to the following New BRANCHES:—BRIDGEWATER (West Somerset District, South-Western Area), PAIGNTON (Torbay District, South-Western Area), and MELKSHAM (Bath Experimental District, Western Area); DUDLEY (Stourbridge District), NUNEATON (North Warwickshire Dis-

trict), STRATFORD-ON-AVON (South Warwickshire District), and SUTTON COLDFIELD (Birmingham North District). These last four are all in the West Midlands Area; WELWYN GARDEN CITY (St. Alban's District, Eastern Area); FISHGUARD (West Wales District), MERTHYR TYDFIL and PONTYPRIDD (North Glamorgan District), and RESOLVEN (Swansea District), in South Wales Area.

❖ TIGNE (Malta) and TOKIO (Japan) have been recognised as Groups.

❖ The elections by Branches and Groups of Councillors to serve on the Central Council of Toc H 1934-36, are now being held. Under the rules, one Councillor is to be elected by General Members, other than those who are members of Groups. The Central Executive decided by drawing lots that their candidate should on this occasion be nominated by the Scottish (Central) Area. At their meeting on July 6 last, the Scottish Area chose to nominate P. W. MONIE, Hon. Administrator at Headquarters. It is open to any member of the General Branch (any member who belongs neither to a Branch nor a Group) to propose another candidate. If twenty-five such members resident in Great Britain or in Ireland agree in proposing another candidate and if their proposals are received at Headquarters within 15 days from the date on which this JOURNAL is despatched to members, a poll of general members will be held in accordance with the rules. If no other candidate is proposed, or if no candidate is proposed by as many as twenty-five members, P. W. Monie will be declared elected.

❖ All communications for the Headquarters of Toc H AUSTRALIA should, in future, be addressed to: The Secretary, Toc H Australia, c/o Box 1202 K, G.P.O., Adelaide, South Australia.

❖ An American Toc H probationer wishes to correspond with members of isolated units anywhere in the world: name and address, Emerson Houghton, The Elms, Alstead Centre, New Hampshire, U.S.A.

❖ AS USUAL, NO JOURNAL WILL BE PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER.

A BAG OF BOOKS

Backs to the Wall

The Outbreak of War, 1914. By E. F. Benson.

The Hundred Days, 1815. By Philip Guedalla.

Gordon at Khartoum. By John Buchan.

All published in the *Great Occasions* Series by Peter Davies. 5s. each.

Sir Douglas Haig's famous Order of the Day on April 12, 1918—"Our backs are to the wall"—was justly calculated to produce the true effect on his troops. It was the briefest possible statement of fact; its sharp monosyllables ring like a word of command. The British mind respects plain brevity and prefers a broad hint to an imperative. The world knows how the Order was received by the nation with mingled dismay and determination, and how the Army 'jumped to it' as a counsel not of despair but of confidence. Compare the excessive lack of ornament in its terms with the style of some other commanders addressing their troops when they were 'up against it.' Here are a few sentences from Napoleon's 'order of the day' to his old soldiers when he landed in France from Elba on his last desperate adventure of the 'Hundred Days':—

"The eagle with the tricolour will fly from steeple to steeple until it reaches the pinnacles of Nôtre Dame. Then you may show your scars . . . In your declining years, honoured by your fellow-countrymen, they will gather round you respectfully to hear the tale of your great deeds, and you will say with pride, 'Yes, I was one of them, one of the *Grande Armée* that marched twice into Vienna and into Rome, Berlin, Madrid and Moscow, and redeemed Paris from the shame . . .'"

It is difficult to believe that this is not the rhetoric of Shakespeare's *Henry V* at second hand:—

He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is named,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian,
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say, 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian':
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day . . .

An English poet could say such things to an Elizabethan audience in patriotic mood, but an English commander, whether Henry V

or any other, would be stricken with a fit of awkwardness in the middle of his best metaphor. Occasionally generals of the last War attempted the grand manner of speech but were rewarded with amusement rather than enthusiasm. To British soldiers even the truly noble words of Garibaldi to his volunteers with their backs to the wall in 1849, would scarcely come well:—

"Fortune, who betrays us to-day, will smile on us to-morrow, I am going out from Rome. Let those who wish to continue the war against the stranger, come with me. I offer neither pay, nor quarters, nor provisions; I offer hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles and death. Let him who loves his country in his heart and not with his lips only, follow me."

On the rarest occasions, at the height of an emergency, the British commander boldly uses exalted language, knowing that it will not fail. Nelson's Trafalgar signal is the most famous example, and a later Admiral, echoing "God for Harry, England and St. George!" of Shakespeare's hero, was not ashamed to make "St. George for England!" the watchword of the assault on Zeebrugge Mole. It is quite likely that some of the heroic sentences attributed by biographers to dying great hearts were never spoken aloud, though often implied, but even in the last failing moments men of our race will sometimes deliver a grand message, their final "Order of the Day." Such are the unforgettable pencilled words which Captain Scott, with his back to the wall, scrawled in the tent in March, 1912:—

"I do not regret this journey, which has shown that Englishmen can endure hardships, help one another, and meet death with as great a fortitude as ever in the past . . . Had we lived, I should have had a tale to tell of the hardihood, endurance and courage of my companions which would have stirred the heart of every Englishman. These rough notes and our dead bodies must tell the tale . . ."

Usually we behave otherwise. Our men have a great distaste for any word or gesture which might be condemned as heroic, even when it would be fully justified. When the moment comes in which they know that their backs are to the wall they fall silent, gird themselves with a dangerous and deep-seated calmness, even rise to the height of their native cheerfulness. Most animals with their backs to the wall will sell their lives dearly, saving their breath for the struggle; even the cornered rat fights with gallantry. So why not men? The rabbit may crouch in its tracks, totally unable to hope against hope, and "rabbit" is our name for men likely so to behave.

Observe the simple and prosaic terms in which the heroes of two of these books go to meet their hour of destiny. Wellington is walking in the Park at Brussels with a friend. He knows that at any moment he must march against 125,000 veteran troops, led by the magic of Napoleon's person, and that his own force will consist of a little over 80,000 men, three quarters of them unknown foreigners, and most of the rest untried regiments from home: on this throw all Europe depends. His inquisitive friend wants the Duke's own opinion of his chances:—

" 'By God,' he said, 'I think Blücher and myself can do the thing' . . . At that moment they observed a British red-coat wandering about the alleys of the little Park and staring at the foreign statues. Wellington's long forefinger shot out in his direction. 'There,' said the Duke, 'it all depends upon that article whether we do the business or not. Give me enough of it and I am sure.' "

There may be something almost shocking in describing the saving of Europe merely as 'doing the business.' At any rate it contrasts pleasantly with sentiments expressed on the other side. Napoleon's marshals betrayed some anxiety about the result beforehand and the Emperor lost his temper with Soult:—

" 'Because you were beaten by Wellington,' he snapped, 'you think he is a good general. I tell you, Wellington is a bad general, the English are bad troops, and it will be a picnic.' "

History was to repeat itself and two kinds of men were to remain true to type. Strange

how once again we come back to Henry VI! Is not this exactly the frame of mind of the same two sides on the eve of Agincourt? Shakespeare may embroider their words, but he knew well their hearts.

And then see how simply the other man, Charles Gordon, stands with his back to the wall at Khartoum:—

" Sunday, December 14 (1884), was the last of the forty days which Gordon had given Wolseley (*leading the relieving force*) as the limit of his power to hold on. On that day he made the last entry in his journal.

' Now mark this, if the Expeditionary Force, and I ask for no more than two hundred men, does not come in ten days, the town may fall; and I have done my best for the honour of my country. Good-bye. C. G. GORDON.' "

Sitting in his comfortable armchair years afterwards, Mr. Lytton Strachey, Gordon's witty detractor, can quote this entry with the comment, "The Journal ended on a note of menace and disdain." It is surely better to picture Gordon's plight. Short of all supplies—food, water, medical stores, and, above all, news of relief, standing on his feet among sick and dying men, he knew in his heart of hearts that this was the end. On the same day he wrote his last letter to the Chief of Staff of the Soudan Expeditionary Force:—

" The state of affairs is such that one cannot foresee further than 5 or 7 days, after which the town may, at any time, fall. I have done all in my power to hold out, but I own I consider the position is extremely critical, almost desperate, and I say this, without any feeling of bitterness, with respect to H.M. Government, but merely as a matter of fact. Should the town fall, it will be questionable whether it will be worth the while of H.M. Government to continue its Expedition . . . "

The handwriting is firm and neat (the letter is reproduced in facsimile in Mr. Buchan's book) and the writer still has "the honour to be your most obedient servant." The rest is silence. No further sign from Gordon reached the outside world, but the manner of his last words should never be forgotten.

England in 1914

The first of the three books under review might seem to have little enough to do with our main heading. When Great Britain entered the world war in 1914 it never crossed the minds of her citizens either that it would

last four years or that within that time they would be told roundly that they had their backs to the wall and would realise it as sober fact. But indeed the moods of 1914 and of 1918 are both typical of the British mind: they belong to the same people and are part and parcel of our national character. With the skill of an accomplished novelist, Mr. Benson composes the picture of what England, or rather the London of Mayfair and the Clubs, looked like in the months before the outbreak of the War. The Season was in full swing. There were lovely frocks (how we laugh at the pictures of them now—and how we are beginning to copy them again!) at Ascot and Henley; brilliant dances and meals 'regardless'; hard-working mothers hawking their eligible daughters; all the bright strenuous traffic of Society at the hard labour of play. Mr. Benson's own rather tiresome concern was packing furniture from his West End flat for dispatch to his villa at Capri, but he found time to dine out a good deal, to join an exclusive country-house party for the week-end and especially to sit at the Oval watching a memorable county match in which Hobbs and Sutcliffe were the giants. True, there were two notable flies in the nation's ointment, both buzzing indecently loud and behaving in an altogether 'un-English' manner—the Suffragettes at home and across a narrow channel the Irish. Nobody could help noticing these noisy minorities; the Government was losing its dignity a little over the women and was undisguisedly anxious about Ireland. But then the Continent—even if it were rather a remote part of it—was also having its 'spot of bother.' Some silly student (perhaps he was mad, you never know) had shot an Austrian Archduke (perhaps he deserved it—one can't tell with these foreign noblemen). Austria, of course, was making a fuss, but it would soon die down. And then the trouble began to draw a stage nearer home as Germany took a hand and France mentioned mobilisation. At a dinner party Mr. Benson sat opposite the 'Club bore' who kept booming away about a war coming—"Mark my words." But by dint of other guests talking very loudly and getting down to the

bridge table quickly, they defeated this nuisance. With the passing weeks neither the Suffragettes nor the Irish showed signs of a truce, but gradually bigger clouds than these began to draw across the Summer sky, so plain at last that men in the stand at the Oval took an eye off the game for a moment to scan the stop-press news in the evening paper. Meanwhile the furniture for Mr. Benson's villa was ready and nothing should stop its dispatch or his own departure from the used-up air of London in August.

Mr. Benson gives a most vivid outline of what was going on behind this bright and leisurely *façade* in the chancelleries of Europe—doubts and delays, threats, bargains and chicaneries. And then—the utterly unbelievable became as good (or bad) as certainty. Last scene of all, told with great dramatic skill: the author has been dining out, gets into a taxi with a friend to drive home; they turn into the Mall, are held up by a huge crowd drifting westwards, and decide that to walk themselves is the only way of progress. Big Ben is striking midnight as they jostle in the crowd outside the railings of Buckingham Palace. A window opens and, framed against the light within, a figure stands upon the balcony: roars of cheering greet the King. Great Britain is at war.

Thus, almost inconsequently as it seems, do the British become involved in the great events in history. They trust a few men whose business it is to foresee; they are content themselves, for the most part, to wait until Big Ben strikes—and then, improvising the means from moment to moment, they are ready most cheerfully and faithfully to take "necessary action." "Do not fuss before the time comes," they seem to say, "We have our hands full with our jobs and the Test Match. Then tell us what to do and we'll do it." If the men who know say (not a moment too soon) "Your King and Country need you," or "Your backs are to the wall," or "Buy War Loan," or even "Use less Water," the great majority of them are wonderfully obedient—and, in moments of life and death, how much more than obedient with all they have and are!

'The Hundred Days'

The subject of the second book, *The Hundred Days*, is naturally Napoleon, but its hero is Wellington. This is all the more pardonable in Mr. Philip Guedalla after his big book *The Duke*. The two protagonists are, as every school history shows, an excellent foil to one another—Napoleon convinced of his inevitable "star" as any king of his divine right, possessing not only *most* rare military genius but all the tricks of a great actor in a country where actors are much honoured, and the 'Iron Duke,' a trained soldier with a great gift (often lacking in such) of commonsense, a lion in courage and a bear in speech. The book is written with a constant sparkle, as we now expect its author to write. The more sober historian will growl that it is too dramatic to be trustworthy (though with Professor Trevelyan as our foremost historian the fashion for dry-as-dust history is less in favour nowadays). Sometimes the reader will feel that the book scores rather cheap points and is witty at the wrong places, but he will not easily lay it aside until the *last* page is finished.

Nothing in the book is better done than its opening:—

"The moon rose a little before nine. . . . It was two hours since a roar of cheering had run down the steep hill towards the harbour after an open carriage followed by a little file of walking men. The cheers swelled into singing as they reached the water's edge and a boat's crew broke into the chorus which had gone half-way round the world. Oars dipped in the black water; a light stole out across the harbour to a waiting ship; a gun spoke; and the waterfront fell silent. They were still waiting for a wind when the moon rose a little before nine. High up on the hillside an empty room with a half-finished book beside the bed stood waiting in the silence; the moonlight crept across the torn and scribbled paper on the floor; and someone had been sticking pins with coloured heads into a large, unfolded map. . . . The sails shuddered; and as straining arms toiled at the sweeps, the little fleet moved silently into the night. An island lay behind them in the bright spring moonlight. Its name was Elba, and the night was February 26, 1815."

Thus did Napoleon Buonaparte stage the opening of his *last* fatal 'come-back.' His musical-comedy kingship of Elba had become irksome, and he made a mad bid for a bigger

stage. It was frankly touch-and-go from the start. His brig had to dodge both an English frigate and a French cruiser on the passage to the mainland. He landed near Cannes, to the dismay of the town, and began to march north with his little bodyguard of Grenadiers from Elba; there were a few dismounted cavalymen, with their saddles on their heads, and the Emperor "walking heavily upon a stick." It was a queer home-coming, and "in the *first* three days of his adventure Napoleon made four recruits." And then the tide began to set in his favour, and he halted among villages cheering deliriously and made lavish distributions of proclamations and the Legion of Honour. The triumphal progress gathered weight, but at one point, Laffray, nearly came to an untimely end. Napoleon there came in touch with the Royal troops who had been sent South to stop him.

"He found an infantry battalion across the road. It was an awkward place, and there was no possibility of avoiding the encounter. . . . A frantic captain yelled an order, 'There he is. Fire!' The words rang out but there was no rattle of musketry on the still afternoon. The scared infantry watched the square figure come towards them. Then it stopped, and they could hear a level voice; 'Men of the Fifth,' it said, 'I am your Emperor, know me.' Still there was not a sound; and in the silence he came nearer, opening his greatcoat. 'If there is one of you,' the even voice went on, 'who would kill his Emperor, here I am.' That ended the long silence. There was a roar of 'Vive l'Empereur!' as they broke their ranks to cheer him. . . ."

Dictators are seldom lacking in personal courage; they cannot afford to be.

The news travelled slowly and was at first scarcely believed. The "stout gentleman with a taste for puns" who ruled in Paris as Louis XVIII was much bothered, and before long fled in his carriage to Belgium. The Allies still in conference at Vienna broke up in dismay (as readers who have seen the picturesque film *Congress Dances* will remember), but not before they had taken steps.

"Upon one point, indeed, the Allies were united: they asked with touching unanimity for English gold. Untroubled by the taste for repayment with which war finance is sometimes complicated, the British Government offered to pay its Allies £5,000,000 a month for the duration of the war. The offer was accepted. . . ."

They did more: they solemnly excommunicated the enemy:—‘*The Powers declare that Napoleon Buonaparte has placed himself outside all human relations and that, as the enemy and disturber of the peace of the world, he has delivered himself up to public justice.*’

Henceforth there was no reply of any sort to the letters and proclamations which Napoleon addressed to the Powers of Europe. He was alone, but hardly in ‘splendid’ isolation, for the scene in Paris was tragic-comedy. Citizens hastily exchanged the Royalist white cockade for the Revolutionary tricolour and pulled the Bourbon lilies off the carpets to disclose the Buonaparte bees underneath. The Emperor was busy Cabinet-making. Statesmen and marshals changed sides in the night—and none more skilfully than the treacherous Fouché, about whom there is much in this book: like a more dastardly ‘Vicar of Bray’ he made the best of every new master. The mob required demonstrations and Napoleon decreed a tremendous *Champ de Mai* festival at which his Empress was to return in state from her parents, the Imperial family of Austria. She never came, for all his letters to her were intercepted by the Allies, but the Emperor showed himself among his people, dressed in a fantastic theatrical costume of red velvet.

It could not go on like this. Napoleon saw a sensational victory, a ‘*coup d’éclat*’ as he called it, as the only chance to impress Europe and hold France. To retake Brussels would be a bad blow to the Allies and a most popular stroke at home, and so he marched north on his last campaign. It opened luckily with a defeat of the Prussians at Quatre Bras, and the retreat of the Allied line towards Waterloo. Wellington, who had warned the Prussians that their position before the battle was risky, made a typical comment on the event: “Old Blücher,” he said, “has had a damned good licking and gone eighteen miles to the rear. We must do the same. I suppose they’ll say in England that we have been licked. Well, I can’t help that.” And so both sides manoeuvred into position for what was to be one of the decisive battles of the world. Waterloo is admirably described in Mr. Guedalla’s book

and nothing need be said of it here. There was no shadow of doubt that the commanders on both sides now had their backs to the wall—Napoleon to save the career that was more to him than life, Wellington and Blücher to save Europe.

The behaviour of the three chief actors was typical of them. On his return to Brussels Wellington summed up the battle to a friend as “a damned nice thing—the nearest run thing you ever saw in your life,” but at the time he was overcome by the losses of his friends and in solemn mood:

“At supper he kept staring at the door, hoping that more survivors of his diminished staff would come in to fill the empty places. He did not eat much; and as he left the room, he lifted both his hands and said, ‘The hand of God has been over me this day.’ Ten miles away a white-faced man was waiting in the broken moonlight of a little wood near Quatre Bras for troops that never came. His face was wet with tears; and, reeling with exhaustion, he rode through the night to Charleroi, while Flahault’s arm kept him in the saddle.”

As for the tough old Prussian:—

“A little after nine the Duke met Blücher on the road by La Belle Alliance. The two men did not dismount; but Blücher kissed his startled colleague in the saddle, calling him ‘*mein lieber Kamerad*’ and remarking sparsely of the day’s fighting ‘*Quelle affaire!*’ which was nearly all the French he knew.”

Gordon’s End

The story of Charles George Gordon’s end is very different. It is the story of the obtuseness and incompetence of the British Government on the one hand and on the other of a simple fulfilment of duty, adorned by bright courage, on the part of one man. Mr. Buchan brings out this contrast in a model book—concise, dramatic, restrained. He begins excellently by short character sketches of the four chief *dramatis personæ*—Mr. Gladstone, Sir Evelyn Baring (afterwards Lord Cromer), Mohammed Ahmed the Mahdi, and Major-General Gordon. In 1883, the fateful year, Mr. Gladstone was 74 years old, a giant in Parliamentary prestige, with no rival save Joseph Chamberlain.

“As compared with the riches of his great rival Mr. Gladstone’s mind was equipped like a Victorian dining-room—a few heavy pieces of furniture and these not of the best pattern.

He cannot interest his successors as Disraeli interests them, for he had nothing of the artist in him, and little of the philosopher . . . But the man himself remains a marvel and a mystery—a character far subtler and more baffling than Disraeli's."

He often answered the description applied to Mr. de Valera—"a man with a one-way mind." Absorbed in settling the Irish question, in extending the franchise and economising in expenditure, he was impatient about the troublesome affair of Egypt and could not be brought to face it with energy until too late. This was the beginning of Gordon's fate.

"Egypt was a labyrinth of paradox. 'One alien race,' in Lord Milner's words, had to control and guide a second alien race, the Turks, by whom they were disliked, in the government of a third race, the Egyptians.' And there was the eternal international paradox, that France laboured to put obstacles in the path of a British policy for which Britain was utterly disinclined, and by her efforts succeeded against her will in forcing an unwilling Britain to do what neither power wanted."

That surely has a modern ring about it! Then there was the future Lord Cromer, 'the maker of Egypt,' a man of 42, at this time unknown to the British public but with a reputation in financial circles. And the insolvency of Egypt was the chief problem for him to attack: Britain, Sir Evelyn Baring felt, must get rid of the Soudan and cut her losses. He and Gordon did not take to each other when they met. Gordon thought Cromer 'pretentious, grand, patronising': Cromer thought Gordon 'unbalanced and unreliable'—a judgment on which the late Lytton Strachey rears much of his case against Gordon in *Eminent Victorians*. (Let us say here at once that Mr. Buchan's book does the great service of finally undoing Strachey's picture of Gordon as a hysterical drunkard. But perhaps the fashion of blackening popular heroes, as a previous generation of biographers had whitewashed villains, is now out of date in any case).

And then we see the fanatical enemy, the Mahdi himself, the chosen redeemer of Islam. Son of a priest, a man magnificently handsome, gifted with speech and convinced of a great religious cause, he had trained himself

by prayer and fasting in the wilderness for his mission. In 1881 he came out as a rebel at the head of any army of 'dervishes': in that year he defeated three expeditions sent out to arrest him. In 1883 he completely destroyed an Egyptian force of 10,000 men under Hicks Pasha, and most of the Soudan, except Khartoum, was in his hands.

"He believed in his mission as fervently as any Christian saint . . . Had he been also a military genius, he might have built up a new and most formidable type of army. As it was he created a fighting brotherhood, sustained by religious ardour and a long tale of past wrongs. Like many prophets he did not practice what he preached, for in the seclusion of their inner tents he and his caliphs wallowed in debaucheries. But when he showed himself in public, to the wild Baggara and the credulous Soudanese he must have seemed indeed the chosen of Heaven."

Then there comes a sketch of Gordon himself, "Chinese Gordon" the popular hero, the man beloved of street boys in Woolwich, the student of the Bible and Christian mystic, an intensely vital figure with a striking face—

"The arresting feature was the eyes. They were of a brilliant blue, set far apart, restless, ardent, capable of melting into an infinite kindliness but also of blazing into a formidable wrath. His whole *régard* suggested simplicity and modesty, but also an extreme tenacity of purpose. It was the face of an adventurer in the worlds of both flesh and spirit."

You may condemn some of his religious views as 'fundamentalist' or fantastic, but his conviction that God rules all events sustained him to the last. Prayer with him was a continual habit and his sense of union with God in Christ removed all fear. His message to the garrison at Khartoum, starving and on the verge of panic, was not so wide of the mark—"When God was portioning out fear to all the people in the world," he said, "at last it came to my turn and there was no fear left to give me."

Such were the four men on whom the drama in the desert was chiefly to depend. This book traces all its stages—the supreme unwillingness of Mr. Gladstone's Government, yielding to the popular slogan "Chinese Gordon for the Soudan!" Sir Evelyn Baring's misgivings and support, French annoyance, official delays. At last Gordon was despatched on the mission of

withdrawing the garrison and the civil population from Khartoum. It is easy long after the event to say that the whole affair was a mistake, but we must try to see it with the eyes of our fathers at the time—

“Some attempt had to be made to save the innocent, only an Englishman could make that attempt, and on the facts Gordon, in spite of drawbacks, was the best Englishman. The course of events has shown that it would have been wiser for all concerned to do nothing; but that view in January, 1884, would have been a cowardly dereliction of duty. It is better for a nation to play the fool than the knave.”

When Gordon landed at Khartoum on February 18 “thousands pressed about him to kiss his hands and his feet.” He took all sorts of energetic measures at once, but made one proposal so extraordinary that the Government at home, knowing the public outcry which would greet it, turned it down. This was that Zobeir, most notorious of slave-traders, then in exile, should be sent to the Soudan to succeed him as a sort of Governor General. Gordon judged that he was the only man able to defeat the Mahdi, and Lord Cromer backed him hard—but it could not be done. At the end of March Lord Cromer had to remind the Government that, having refused the help of Zobeir, they were still responsible for the safety of Khartoum and General Gordon. At the end of April a post on the Nile surrendered, with the loss of large stores of food and rifles and one of Gordon’s precious steamers, his only means of communication with the outside world. At the end of May the town of Berber, the key to Khartoum for a relieving force, fell into the Mahdi’s hands. Not until the last day of July did the Cabinet, forced by popular clamour, decide to send an expedition, and not until early September did Sir Garnet Wolseley, Gordon’s old friend, arrive in Cairo to make arrangements. He was a deliberate and thorough organiser and was still getting his force in order when a letter from Gordon,

dated November 4, reached him, with the news that he could hold out for forty more days at most.

“But Gordon’s friends were always confident that he could better his best, and that if he spoke of holding on for six weeks he could hold on for six months. The concentration at Korti could not be completed before Christmas, and the crossing of the desert and the advance to Khartoum would take at the best a fortnight. That is to say, Gordon could not be rescued till six weeks or more after the last date he had given as the limit of endurance. Still Wolseley does not seem to have been specially anxious; at any rate he took no steps to expedite the pace of his movements . . . meantime during the last three months of the year Gordon was fighting his desperate battle against odds, and he was fighting it alone. He had no confidant except his journal, and no counsellor except the valour of his heart.”

On January 17 the relieving force had a fierce engagement with the dervishes at Abu Klea; it beat them off, but with the loss of the men chosen to lead the expedition. This victory caused complete consternation to the enemy and would have changed the whole situation if it could have been followed up at once. A European prisoner in the Mahdi’s camp wrote afterwards, “Had twenty red-coats arrived in Khartoum it would have been saved.” But delays continued. There is a grim absurdity in the fact that Lord Charles Beresford, leader of the Naval Brigade, was now afflicted with desert boils and used the expedition’s steamers for three crucial days in useless reconnaissance in order to give himself time to be fit to go forward. When they did advance, on January 24, one of the steamers struck a rock and held them all up for another twenty-four hours.

“Early on Wednesday the 28th, the expedition came in sight of Khartoum . . . they saw through glasses that no flag was flying . . . As they rounded the corner they beheld a wrecked city, with the Mahdi’s banners flaunting under the walls, and knew all was over. They were sixty hours too late.”

B. B.

AS USUAL, NO JOURNAL WILL BE PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER.

We repeat this notice three times in the present issue in the vain hope of reducing the tide of pained letters which, every year, subscribers write to the Registrar, complaining of the non-arrival of a non-existent JOURNAL.

THE FAMILY CHRONICLE

According to custom no Despatches from Home Areas are published in August.

From Mauritius

TOC H began in Mauritius at ten o'clock one evening during November, 1932. Its first report was published in January, 1933, since when the Group has met twenty times. The earliest meetings were dedicated to stocktaking and the attempt to discover if the problems facing the unit were being tackled in the right way, as a result of which alterations were made in the organisation of Hospital Visiting and paper distribution. Following on this period, came the news that *Mauritius'* application for Group status had been favourably answered. Developments have occurred with the local Industrial School. The Bishop and the Officer Administering the Government addressed the Group on the subject of the formation of an After-Care Committee for the School. He had talked the question over with the Roman Catholic Bishop of Port Louis. A short time afterwards a committee was formed and has been working now for about a year. This is about to be changed from an After-Care Committee to a Visiting Committee to assist in the running of the School. Toc H continues its interest in the School and is planning to help them with their sports soon.

At the beginning of the year, both the Governor and the Inspector General of the Police asked the Group if they would organise a subscription for funds for the starting of a Drum and Fife Band at the School. About thirty-nine pounds were raised, which was sufficient to make its formation possible.

The work with ships continues much as before. Touch is kept with sailors left behind in the hospitals, especially on such days as Christmas. For the rest it is mostly a matter of supplying the ships with papers and getting their crews up country when possible.

The Group was refreshed and cheered by the visit of Major Akers, whose stay in Mauritius was reported in the *JOURNAL* in March this year. Not only are papers collected for the ships which call, but also for lighthouses and isolated forest stations. The attempt is now to organise this work on a regular monthly basis.

The quest for work always goes on. The latest discovery is that help is possible in the Mental Hospital. An important change in the life of the Group has been made following the realisation that the members had reached such a stage that they were strongly attached to particular jobs, and the Group itself was the unit wherein the experience of each on his own job could be pooled. Accordingly, the Group meets now only once a month.

The report ends thus: "In general, I think that it may be said that the work of the Group has increased during the year, and that we have moved forward a little. There is, however, yet much to do. This report would be incomplete if it failed to mention the way in which the Bishop has supported and inspired us during this year of our work."

From the Royal Navy

On Board H.M.S. Enterprise

"WHEN we had arrived on the East Indies Station, a few chaps got together with the idea of learning more about Toc H, and at the same time of trying to interest others, so that we could begin to be useful. So, on the first cruise

we got into touch with *Madras* and a little more knowledge was gleaned and the beginning of what later proved a firm and helping friendship was formed.

"Back in Trincomalee things began to move. Through our worthy Jobmaster, the

matter was put to a certain Padre in charge of the Methodist Mission, and behold, the result was a room. Now this room was given to us and it formed part of the "Ancient Mariners' Rest," complete with muzzle-loading cannons.

"Picture any old cross roads. On one corner stands a village hotel; on the opposite corner a Police Station; the other corners occupied by the said Ancient Rest of Mariners and the Headquarters of the Mission; the whole in sad need of a coat of paint outside and whitewash inside.

"The first move was a meeting held in the room. The Padre was elected Chairman, and two others Secretary and 'Jobs.' First and foremost it was decided to make Trincomalee the base of Toc H activities for the Squadron. A few chaps off H.M.S. *Effingham* and one from *Emerald* then joined us.

"Next, work. How to stem that tide of work we hardly knew. Let this be understood, the Squadron is together only six weeks at a time and that only twice a year. We started, Padre being the prime mover as to the wherewithal to paint without. The Mission Church was begun and eventually got painted outside, while the walls were touched up inside. Electric light was installed completely. As a sequel to that the seats were stained and the kneelers repaired and upholstered with coconut fibre; result, almost a new Church. That all took time and was done in sections helped by the timely arrival of H.M.S. *Hawkins* with its family of artificers.

"While this work was going on our room had to be made brighter, as well as the Deep Sea Scouts' Den next to it. Also the Service graves in the Cemetery needed attention, and various repairs about the Mission cropped up meanwhile. Weekly meetings were held, without fail, the whole time we spent at Trincomalee during the Commission. Latterly a new field of work has been opened up with Trincomalee,

through the House of Joy at Talawa.

"All our work in Trincomalee was crowned by our First Birthday Festival in March this year. Of course, all this could not go on without somebody on shore getting curious about it, and through the Padre a few citizens appeared in our midst now and again. Actually we saw so little of them that we had begun to wonder if they were doing as much as we thought they should. This idea was definitely hit on the head the night of the Festival when sixty-eight souls packed that little Church and raised the roof with Praise and Remembrance. Sixty-four attended the meeting to learn a little more of Toc H, and sat down to supper with us, after which the rafters of the Mission School rang with rollicking songs. Truly a wonderful farewell for us who had watched it from birth.

"Now to Colombo. Here we dock once a year and have our month in Camp at Diyatalawa. What little time we spent ashore this year was shared with the Blind School, the Boys' Club (Toc H), and Branch meetings. Here were our fairy Godfathers, 'Alec' and 'Bodge,' as we call them among ourselves; our two beacons they have been throughout, peacemakers, work-finders, and fathers combined. To them we owe not a little of our welfare in the Squadron.

"Let us for a moment think of the Stations we have visited, *Calcutta*, *Madras*, *Bombay*, *Karachi*, *Rangoon*, *Abadan*, each and every place has shared our troubles and helped us on the right road. The men in *Sindh* actually pulled us out of the "Slough of Despond" by their fine example of team spirit and comradeship. I hope that this will not sound like a burst of trumpet blowing, because all that we have done is to blunder round India groping, but even then I can say that we have not groped in vain. Thank you, India and Ceylon, for all the help you have given us."

* * * *

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